

SMSgt (Ret.) Rob Rosenberger

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Lieutenant General Emmett O'Donnell, Jr, USAF

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Emmett O'Donnell, Jr, was born at Brooklyn, New York, September 15, 1906. He was graduated from the US Military Academy and appointed a second lieutenant of Infantry June 9, 1928. In the fall of that year, he began flying training at the Primary Flying School at Brooks Field, Texas. He then transferred to the Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field, Texas, from which he was graduated in 1930. His first assignment was with the First Pursuit Group at Selfridge Field, Michigan, and on March 24, 1930, he was transferred to the Air Force.

In February 1934 he became an air mail pilot for the Army Air Corps Mail Operations at Cleveland, Ohio, and in June returned to Selfridge Field. From 1934 to 1938, he served as a football coach at the US Military Academy during the football seasons. CMS 69

He was assigned to the 18th Reconnaissance Group at Mitchel Field, New York, in December 1936, and remained there until he was enrolled in the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama, in June 1939. Upon his graduation in August he returned to Mitchel Field. In February 1940 he became a squadron commander in the 11th Bombardment Group in Hawaii.

When the United States entered World War II in December 1941, he was in the Philippines after having led the first squadron of B-17 Flying Fortresses across the Pacific. His group fought in the air and on the ground until they were forced to withdraw to Bataan and later to Mindanao. General O'Donnell and some of his group were eventually evacuated to Java.

21 JUL 1988

Director
Aerospace Studi
ATTN: Archives
Maxwell AFB, AL

RETURN

K239.293

0800- CSS-21, Ft Benning Firepower Demonstration: (Allied and
1700 Phase I officers.) See special instructions posted on
bulletin boards.

SATURDAY - 12 OCTOBER 1957

0800- CSS-268-1, Staff Study Preparation
1200

FOR THE COMMANDANT:

1 Incl

Biographical sketches,
Mr. Wilson, Gen O'Donnell
and Gen Preston

William M. Tesla
WILLIAM M. TESLA

Lt Colonel, USAF
School Secretary

Biographical sketch, Gen O'Donnell

Before the war in the Philippines was two days old, General O'Donnell earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. Forced off the ground by an enemy air attack upon Clark Field, Manila, he proceeded individually to Vigan where he attacked a heavy cruiser and destroyer escort. Because of trouble with the bomb releases, he had to make five runs over the target while subjected to heavy antiaircraft fire and, during the last run, to enemy fighters.

From January 20, 1942, when he arrived in Java, until the first of March, when that country was taken by the Japanese, General O'Donnell served as operations officer of the Far Eastern Air Force. He then was evacuated to India, where he became operations officer of the newly-organized Tenth Air Force.

In March 1943 General O'Donnell became chief of General Henry H. Arnold's Advisory Council in Washington, D. C., a post he retained until he was appointed Commanding General of the 73d Bomb Wing at Smoky Hill Army Air Field at Salina, Kansas, a year later. He trained the wing for six months and then led it to Saipan to begin the B-29 attacks on Japan. In November 1944 General O'Donnell led the first B-29 attack on Tokyo.

General O'Donnell was assigned to Air Materiel Command headquarters at Wright Field in December 1945, and became deputy chief of the Engineering Division. He remained there until August 1946, when he was made Director of Information of the AAF. In September 1947 after USAF headquarters was established, he was designated Director of Air Information in the Directorate of Public Relations. In January 1948 he was appointed steering and coordinating member of the military representation on the Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada-United States; the Canada-United States Military Cooperation Committee; and the Joint Mexico-United States Defense Commission. He was named Commanding General of the Fifteenth Air Force at Colorado Springs, Colorado, in August 1948, and on November 7, 1949, moved with the headquarters to March Air Force Base, California.

Early in 1950, as a result of United Nations action against Communist forces in Korea, General O'Donnell took a nucleus of his Fifteenth Air Force staff to the Far East to organize and command the Far East Bomber Command, with headquarters in Japan. His first B-29 units to arrive in Japan accomplished the outstanding feat of carrying out a maximum effort bombing mission in Korea 36 hours after the first B-29 touched down in Japan after a fly-over from the United States. During this period of temporary duty, he retained command of the Fifteenth Air Force, with headquarters at March Air Force Base. He returned to the United States on January 18, 1951.

On May 1, 1953, General O'Donnell became Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel at Air Force Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

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Biographical sketch, Gen O'Donnell

For his services during the Korean campaign, General O'Donnell was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. He also has been awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Legion of Merit, Air Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Presidential Unit Citation with one Cluster.

General O'Donnell is rated a Command Pilot.

Promotions: He was promoted to first lieutenant on October 4, 1934, with date of rank of Oct 1, 1934; to captain (temporary) April 20, 1935; to captain (permanent) June 9, 1938; to major (temporary) February 1, 1941; to lieutenant colonel (temporary) January 23, 1942, with date of rank of January 5, 1942; to colonel (temporary) May 9, 1942, with date of rank of March 1, 1942; to brigadier general (temporary) on March 9, 1944, with date of rank of February 22, 1944; to major (permanent) June 9, 1945; to major general (temporary) February 27, 1947, with date of rank of February 2, 1947; to colonel (permanent) April 2, 1948; to brigadier general (permanent) January 27, 1950, with date of rank from September 21, 1949; to major general (permanent) October 9, 1951, with date of rank from September 28, 1949; to lieutenant general (temporary) May 1, 1953.

Medals: General O'Donnell's campaign ribbons include World War II Victory Medal, American Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; American Campaign Medal, Philippine Defense Ribbon; Inter-American Defense Board Medal; Korean Service Medal; UN Service Medal.

Brigadier General Joseph J. Preston, USAF

General Preston was born January 17, 1912, at Elgin, Minnesota. His wife is the former Eleanor S. Keithley; children are Janet Lee and Carol E.

Education: University of Minnesota, B.S. degree in 1938. Primary and advanced flying school, 1944; Armed Forces Staff College, 1947. Commissioned June 11, 1938. He is a senior pilot, aircraft observer, and combat observer.

Decorations: His decorations include the Silver Star; Legion of Merit; Distinguished Flying Cross with three Oak Leaf Clusters; Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters; American Defense Medal; WW II Victory Medal; A-P Theater Medal; American Theater Medal; Commendation Ribbon; and Croix de Guerre (French) with Palm.

Assignments: In 1942-43, he was CO, 365th Bomber Squadron; 1943-44, D/C, Operations, 3d Air Division; 1944, D/C, 20th Bomber Command; 1945, CO, Lead Crew School, Muroc, California; 1946-48, Instructor at the Armed Forces Staff College; 1949-51, D/O, Second Air Force; 1951, CO, 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing; present position, Commander, 825th Air Division, Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION
PRESS BRANCH

LIEUTENANT GENERAL EMMETT O'DONNELL, JR., USAF

Emmett O'Donnell, Jr., was born in Brooklyn, New York, on September 15, 1906. He was graduated from the U. S. Military Academy on June 9, 1928, and appointed a second lieutenant of Infantry. That Fall he entered Primary Flying School at Brooks Field, Texas, and was graduated from the Advanced Flying School at Kelly Field, Texas, in 1930.

Assigned to the First Pursuit Group at Selfridge Field, Michigan, on March 24, 1930, he was transferred to the Air Force. In February 1934 he became an air mail pilot for the Army Air Corps Mail Operations at Cleveland, Ohio, and that June returned to Selfridge. He served with the 18th Reconnaissance Group at Mitchel Field, New York, from December 1936 to June 1939, and was football coach at the U. S. Military Academy during the football seasons from 1934 to 1938. Entering the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama, in June 1939, he was graduated that August and returned to Mitchel Field. The following February he became a squadron commander in the 11th Bomb Group in Hawaii.

When the United States entered World War II in December 1941, General O'Donnell was in the Philippines after leading the first squadron of B-17 Flying Fortresses across the Pacific. His group was forced to withdraw to Bataan and later Mindanao, some eventually being evacuated to Java. Arriving in Java on January 20, 1942, he served as operations officer of the Far Eastern Air Force until the first of March when that country was taken by the Japanese. He was then evacuated to India where he became operations officer of the Tenth Air Force.

Transferred to Army Air Force Headquarters, Washington, D. C., in March 1943, General O'Donnell became Chief of the Advisory Council to the Commanding General of the AAF. A year later he moved to Smoky Hill Field, Salina, Kansas, and assumed command of the 73rd Bomb Wing, taking it to Saipan six months later to begin the B-29 attacks on Japan in November 1944. He went to Wright Field, Ohio, in December 1945, and became Deputy Chief of the Engineering Division at Air Materiel Command, headquarters.

Returning to AAF Headquarters the next August, General O'Donnell was named Director of Information, and in September 1947 was redesignated Director of Air Information in the Directorate of Public Relations, USAF. The following January he was appointed steering and coordinating member of the military representation on the Permanent Joint Board on Defense, Canada-U.S.; Canada-U. S. Military Cooperation Committee; Joint Mexico-U.S. Defense Commission; and Senior Air Force Member on the Joint Brazil-U.S. Defense Committee.

MORE

Joining the Strategic Air Command on September 30, 1948, General O'Donnell assumed command of the 15th Air Force at Colorado Springs, Colorado, moving it to March Air Force Base, California, on November 7, 1949. Early in 1950 he took a nucleus of his 15th Air Force staff to the Far East to organize and command the Far East Bomber Command in Japan, while retaining command of the 15th of March. He returned to the United States on January 18, 1951.

Reassigned to Air Force Headquarters on May 1, 1953, General O'Donnell was appointed Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

His decorations include the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Air Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster. He is rated a command pilot.

PROMOTIONS

He was promoted to first lieutenant October 1, 1934; to captain (temporary) April 20, 1935; to captain (permanent) June 9, 1938; to major (temporary) January 31, 1941; to lieutenant colonel (temporary) January 31, 1941; to colonel (temporary) March 1, 1943; to brigadier general (temporary) February 22, 1944; to major (permanent) June 9, 1945; to major general (temporary) February 2, 1947; to colonel (permanent) April 21, 1948; to brigadier general (permanent) January 27, 1950; to major general (permanent) October 10, 1951; to lieutenant general (temporary) May 1, 1953.

E N D

Up to date as of May 1954.

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAXWELL FIELD, ALA., 13 December 1946---Candor in public relations was urged by Brig. Gen. Emmett O'Donnell, Jr., Director of Information, Headquarters, Army Air Forces, Washington, D.C., in addressing students of the Air University this morning at Maxwell Field. "Public Relations should not be confused with show business," he added.

The Air Force is responsible for the ^{air} security of the United States and it is the job of public relations to keep the public thoroughly informed on what is being done towards that end, according to General O'Donnell, who said "that showmanship and ballyhoo not only are not needed but not wanted." He explained the Army Air Force must present ^{its} problems, gains, and efforts to the public in an honest and frank way with no glorification.

Gen. O'Donnell stated "the Air University is the best school in either the Army or Navy today. He recalled that it was started right after V-J Day as a "real effort and a good one."

In urging candor, Gen. O'Donnell stressed the necessity of telling the public that "we have to rebuild what we threw away by rapid demobilization and it will cost tremendous amounts of money," adding that if "we don't pay money we may have to pay in life and blood. The public knows we had the most powerful air force in the world on V-J Day and they also know that we are left with a very inadequate one through rapid demobilization and drastic cuts in the budget."

Gen. O'Donnell flew here from Washington to address the students of the Air Command & Staff School and the Special Staff School of the Air University on the "objects of public relations."

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

GENERAL EMMETT O'DONNELL, JR., USAF

Present Position: Commander in Chief, Pacific Air
Forces, Hickam AFB, Hawaii

Birthplace and Date: Brooklyn, N.Y., 15 September 1906

Education:

1928, graduate US Military Academy; Advanced Flying
Sch, Kelly Fld, 1930; Air Corps Tactical School, 1939.

Military Background:

Mar 30-Dec 36, squadron duties, First Pursuit Gp, Self-
ridge Fld, Mich (served as Asst Football Coach at USMA during
1934-38 seasons); Dec 36-Feb 40, Squadron and Gp duties, 18th
Recon Gp, Mitchel Fld, N.Y.; Feb 40-Jan 42, Sq Comdr and Gp
Comdr, 11th Bomb Gp, Hickam Fld, Hawaii; Clark Fld, Bataan,
Mindanao, and Philippine Islands; Jan 42-Mar 42, Operations
Off, Far East Air Force, Java; Mar 42-Mar 43, Asst CofS, A-3
Hq 10th AF, India; Mar 43-Feb 44, Chief, Advisory Council,
Hq AAF, Wash, D.C.; Mar 44-Nov 45, CG, 73d Bomb Wg (H), Sai-
pan; Nov 45-Aug 46, Deputy Chief, Engineering Div, Air
Technical Service Comd, Wright Fld, Ohio; Aug 46-Sep 47,
Dir of Information, Hq AAF, Wash, D.C.; Sep 47-Jan 48, Deputy
Dir of Public Relations, Hq USAF, Wash, D.C.; Jan 48-Sep 48,
Steering and coordinating member, Permanent Joint Board on
Defense, Canada-United States; The Canada-United States Mil-
itary Cooperation Committee; The Joint Mexico-United States
Defense Commission; and the Joint Brazil-United States De-
fense Commission; Oct 48-Apr 53, Comdr, 15th AF, March AFB,
California (5 Jul 50-10 Jan 51 on TDY as CG, Far East Bomber
Comd, Japan); May 53-Jul 59, Deputy CofS for Personnel, Hq
USAF, Wash, D.C.; Aug 59, assumed present position.

Decorations:

Distinguished Service Cross; Distinguished Service
Medal; Silver Star; Legion of Merit; Distinguished Flying
Cross with 3 OLC; Air Medal with the OLC; Honorary Compan-
ion of the Military Division of the Most Honorable Order of
the Bath (C.B.); Inter-American Defense Board Medal; UN
Service Medal; Presidential Unit Citation with OLC; Korean
Presidential Unit Citation.

Previous War College Lectures: 1951

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION
Washington 25, D. C.

NO. 128-51

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JANUARY 23, 1951

LI 5-6700, Ext. 75131

FOR THE PRESS:

The Air Force today made public the following letter written by General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, USAF Chief of Staff, and addressed to Major General Emmett O'Donnell:

January 23, 1951

Major General Emmett O'Donnell, Jr.
Commanding General
Fifteenth Air Force
March Air Force Base
Riverside, California

Dear General O'Donnell:

The published reports quoting you as urging the immediate use of the atom bomb on Communist China caused considerable concern to the Air Force. After personal investigation I am now confident that your remarks did not urge that course of action. Because of my very high regard for your record and value to the Air Force, I am very pleased that this is so.

I feel certain you realize that Air Force personnel must use care in public remarks so that they will not be subject to misinterpretation.

I trust that your able leadership which showed up so excellently in Korea will stand the country in good stead in your return to active command of the Fifteenth Air Force, a move which I directed at the urgent request of General LeMay. Your resumption of this command is based upon recognition of the high importance of the Strategic Air Command in the presently expanding Air Force.

Sincerely,

/S/ HOYT S. VANDENBERG
Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

END



P-1515 - Maj. Gen. Emmet O'Donnell.

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